

not answered

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Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
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Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I recently leafed through Never Again (I may buy it when finance permits). I entirely agree with the position you take on the last page of the book as it relates to preventing another mass murder of Jews.

As for the body of the book, I detect several instances where you appear to ask readers to draw conclusions that do not necessarily follow from assertions you make, even if the assertions are true. A critique of two such instances follows. I hope you will forgive my inability to cite page numbers.

1. Assertion: The FBI destroyed some assassination-related evidence (notably a threatening letter which Lee Harvey Oswald had sent to FBI agent James Hosty). Conclusion: The FBI was trying to cover up the entire assassination.

I do not doubt that J. Edgar Hoover personally ordered Oswald's letter destroyed. I do doubt that the letter's destruction means that Hoover intended to cover up the entire assassination. Instead, I believe that Hoover was basically a careerist, that he was compromised because Meyer Lansky was blackmailing him as a homosexual, and that therefore Hoover's motive for having Oswald's letter destroyed was a personal one.

If it had become known in 1964 that the Dallas FBI office had received, in 1963, a threatening letter from the man accused of later assassinating the President, J. Edgar Hoover would have been asked a lot of embarrassing questions--starting with, "Why was the letter not shown to the Secret Service before the Dallas trip?" My guess is that Hoover would have ultimately been forced to resign his beloved post as Director of the FBI--in disgrace. Furthermore, once out of office, Hoover would no longer have been able to hold up his end of the deal I believe he had with Meyer Lansky, i. e. that the FBI would not look into Lansky's (illegal) business activities in exchange for Lansky's not disclosing that Hoover was a homosexual.

I am not naive enough to believe that Meyer Lansky would have discontinued to ask J. Edgar Hoover for consideration for not revealing Hoover's sexual orientation in the event Hoover

were forced out of his job. Of course, in such a case Lansky could no longer have extracted from Hoover a promise that the FBI would not investigate him. Lansky would, however, still have been in a position to ask Hoover for (plenty of) money. I believe that one of the reasons Hoover held onto his office until his death was that he feared privation (or disgrace) in his old age if he stepped down. My guess is that Hoover thought he might have to spend such an old age effectively turning over his pension checks to Lansky as blackmail.

I do not accept the thesis that the destruction of Oswald's letter is evidence of a huge FBI coverup of the assassination, especially as the FBI apparently left most of the assassination evidence intact. Instead, I believe that Hoover's motive for having Oswald's letter destroyed was that he feared a public outcry, and the resulting probable dismissal from his job, if the existence of the letter became known. If he had lost his job, I believe that Hoover might ultimately have faced poverty or even the exposure of his hidden sexual life.

2. Assertion: The nick in the curb near the point where James Tague was standing could not have been caused by a bullet fired from the Texas School Book Depository. Conclusion: Someone fired at President Kennedy from another point in Dealey Plaza.

I agree with you that the nick in the curb was not caused by a bullet fired from the TSBD. However, you seem to overlook the possibility that the nick was caused by a fragment from a bullet that had been fired from the TSBD. My guess is that the curb was hit by a fragment from the third bullet Oswald fired, i. e. the one that struck President Kennedy in the head. I will omit here the arguments about whether a copper-jacketed bullet such as the ones that were used in the Mannlicher-Carcano could have fragmented after hitting the President in the head (I have seen the arguments for both sides of that issue). I will note that if one points a rifle from the sixth floor southeast corner window of the TSBD at the spot where the President's head was at Z-313, the rifle will also point at the middle portal of the triple overpass, which is where Mr. Tague was standing. I do not believe that the windshield of the President's limousine would necessarily have prevented all of the fragments from the Z-313 shot from reaching the curb near Mr. Tague, assuming that that shot was fired from the sixth floor of the TSBD. Furthermore, if I am right when I theorize that the nick (and therefore Mr. Tague's injury) must have been caused by a fragment from the third shot fired, it would be consistent with Mr. Tague's own 1964 testimony that his injury was caused by the second or third shot he heard.

Another item: You continue to dismiss the single-bullet theory. Perhaps you would be slightly less likely to do so if you took a look at the Zapruder film, particularly the part after

the limousine emerges from behind the Stemmons Freeway sign, and compared the timing of Governor Connally's reaction to his chest wound with Mrs. Kennedy's reaction to her husband's neck wound (i. e. as she begins to reach for her husband's left arm and shoulder). To me, Governor Connally and Mrs. Kennedy give the appearance of acting in tandem. This photographic evidence, among other things, leads me to believe that a single bullet hit the President and the Governor at Z-229 (plus or minus one frame). This theory is not wildly inconsistent with Governor Connally's testimony that he was hit between frames 231 and 234 (see your own Photographic Whitewash, p. 300).

Finally: You write that John F. Kennedy might have been assassinated because he intended to end American involvement in Vietnam. If you had ever read the Pentagon Papers you would not have uttered such rubbish. From them you will find that it is an untruth to say that President Kennedy intended to end the American intervention in Vietnam under any circumstances save after a total defeat of the Viet Cong. When Kennedy entered office, the United States had fewer than 1,000 troops in Vietnam. At the time of his assassination, there were over 15,000 American military personnel there. Furthermore, three weeks before the assassination the South Vietnamese military had overthrown the unpopular South Vietnamese government led by the Ngo brothers. The White House had known all about the planned coup d'etat against the Ngos but had withheld from them all information about the coup, apparently because there was a feeling in Washington that the South Vietnamese generals would be better able to prosecute the war against the Viet Cong than the Ngos had been. The Ngos were killed during the coup.

I realize that you will probably not answer this, so about all I can ask is that you give it some thought. A theme that I detect through all of your writing is that you alone know the truth about the assassination. It may be that you know more about it than any one individual, and it may be (as you say), that the assassination theories of the Warren Commission, Gerald Posner, Jim Moore, and Howard Donahue are incorrect (I believe that each of them has its errors) but it does not follow that Oswald was innocent, or that Oswald was actually a right-wing extremist (would those two assertions not be mutually exclusive in your universe?), or that John F. Kennedy was assassinated by conspiring right-wing low-lives.

Very truly yours,

Robert Katz

cc: Larry Hinton